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# Governor Visits Policy

# Thakeham Primary School

Date approved by Full Governing Body: 20.09.21

Review Date: 02/09/22

Signed

Headteacher: *S. Norton*

Chair of Governors: *Judith James*

## **Context**

One of the key roles and responsibilities for the Governing Body is to monitor the progress and performance of the school. Undertaking visits demonstrates the Governors' role in the strategic management of the school by helping to hold the school to account and evaluate its progress. The Governors' visiting programme is an integral part of the school's yearly monitoring calendar.

Regular Governor visits involve focussing on an aspect of the School Strategic Development Plan or one of the Governing Body's duties. Each Governor is encouraged to make at least two such visits a year during school time in accordance with the agreed timetable (see appendix 1).

Governors have a strategic role which should not involve the nominated Governors attending meetings with individual parents or taking part in discussions concerning individual pupils. The Governing body or nominated Governors should not become involved in the school's day to day activities.

"Many boards find that visiting their school(s), particularly during the day, is a helpful way to find out more about the school, its staff and students. Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, the board can see for themselves whether the school is implementing their policies and improvement plans and how they are working in practice. Visits also provide an opportunity to talk with pupils, staff and parents to gather their views; though are unlikely to be sufficient for these purposes." (Governance Handbook 2020.)

In practical terms the nominated Governors should try to:

- Undertake school visits and attend meetings as outlined in this policy
- Know the school's relevant policy and procedures (contributing to these where appropriate)
- Understand how funding is allocated to schools for the relevant area
- Attend relevant training for Governors

"The board bears legal responsibility for the school(s)' actions. However, individuals are generally protected from personal liability when acting in the course of their duties. Provided they act honestly, reasonably and in good faith, any liability will fall on the board even if it exceeds its powers, rather than on individuals." (Governance Handbook 2020.)

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Governors' Code of Conduct, which sets out the ethos of professionalism within which they should act: ensuring integrity, objectivity and honesty at all times and operating in the best interests of the school.

## **Visits enable Governors to:**

- See the school at work and observe the range of attitudes, behaviour and achievements.
- Ensure that resources are being used to support the school's vision and priorities as set out in the School Strategic Development Plan, evaluate their impact and discuss further requirements with staff.
- Get to know the staff and demonstrate their commitment to the school.
- Give active support to the staff and the activities of the school.

- Be aware of the effect of change and different approaches to teaching and learning.
- Gain first-hand information to assist with policy making and decision taking.
- Work in partnership with the staff.

**Before making a visit Governors will:**

- Agree a date, time and focus for the visit with the Headteacher (usually in line with the SSDP) and support the formulation of the Governors' Visit Schedule.
- Clarify the etiquette, courtesies and expectations for the visit.
- Plan which classes/activities will be visited.
- Draw up a timetable for the visit with the Headteacher and/or Curriculum Leader.
- Headteacher and/or the Curriculum Leader ensure that all staff are aware of the visit and the expectations on them.

**On the day of the visit the Governor will remember to:**

- Arrive on time and clarify the timetable with the Headteacher/Curriculum Leader.
- Act as an observer and only participate in the class at the invitation of the teacher.
- Respect the professionalism of the teacher, supporting but not interfering.
- Be calm and enjoy the visit.

**It is important to remember that visits are a snapshot in time and judgements should not be made arbitrarily. The visit is not about:-**

- Inspection.
- Making judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher.
- Checking on your own children.
- Pursuing a personal agenda.
- Arriving with inflexible pre-conceived ideas.

**After the visit the Governor will:**

- Remember to thank the teachers and children.
- Meet with the Headteacher /Curriculum Leader to give a verbal report and to raise any issues that arose.

- Complete the Governor Visit Report, concentrating on the focus. The completed form should be emailed to the Curriculum Leader **within 5 days in word format** and then, after any agreed alterations, the form will be circulated to the Headteacher and Clerk to the Governing Body who will store it on the GVO and place it in any relevant meeting packs.
- Governors must report without giving opinions and (where practicable) it should not be possible to identify individuals from the report. Governors are an important part of the school team and are welcomed into the school by staff. It is important that Governors remember to respect the professionals and the children, support the Headteacher and the staff and acknowledge that they represent the Full Governing Body. If the agreed principles and procedures are followed then Governor visits will be an enjoyable experience for all involved and will result in effective monitoring by the Governing Body, which will contribute to continued school improvement.

### **Covid-19 Protocols**

The Governors and Headteacher will follow the latest DfE guidance in planning and undertaking visits and meetings and follow all school Covid-19 protocols and risk assessments. If national guidance and the school's risk Covid-19 risk assessment prevents face to face governor visits from taking place, alternate arrangements should be implemented wherever possible, for example use of online platforms with staff and pupils with agreement of all concerned. It is important that governors adopt agreed strategies to be assured that the school are undertaking the actions outlined in the School Strategic Development Plan and that policy is being followed in practice.

**APPENDIX 1 ALLOCATION OF GOVERNORS TO SSDP AREAS/SPECIFIC ROLES 20-21**

<b>SSDP PRIORITY AREA</b>	<b>LINKED CURRICULUM AREA/KEY ASPECTS</b>	<b>LINKED GOVERNOR</b>
<b>Strategic Intent 1: Curriculum Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• RE &amp; SMSC</li> </ul> Equality and diversity (through above aspects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judy Tuck</li> <li>• Paul Skelding</li> <li>• Tom Gray</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Intent 2: Improve pupil achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English</li> <li>• Maths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kate Nolan &amp; Co-opted Governor (from 21/10/21)</li> <li>• Judy Tuck &amp; Cheryl Stockwell (New Parent Governor from 21/10/21)</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Intent 3: Learning to Learn &amp; AfL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metacognition &amp; self-regulation</li> <li>• AfL</li> <li>• Learning conversations/coaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gina Webb</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Intent 4: Behaviour and attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kate Nolan</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Intent 5: Support mental health and wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and pupil wellbeing and mental health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Karen Bridle</li> </ul>
<b>ROLE</b>	<b>KEY RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>NOMINATED GOVERNOR</b>
<b>Safeguarding (&amp; E-Safety)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure an appropriate policy is in place and implemented effectively in association with other policies</li> <li>• Monitor the Safeguarding policy and SCR</li> <li>• Work with the Headteacher and other appropriate staff to ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities</li> <li>• Ensure support and opportunity for training is available</li> <li>• Undertake a safeguarding audit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kate Nolan</li> </ul>
<b>SEN&amp; D/CLA (Part of Inclusion Governor Role)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the Headteacher and the InCo in ensuring the provisions of the Code of Practice and relevant policies are implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judy Tuck</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the implementation of the Inclusion SSDP</li> <li>• Promote the educational achievements of Children Looked After</li> </ul>	
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the school health and safety representative to ensure the school has a health and safety policy in place and implemented effectively</li> <li>• Attend PDP meetings</li> <li>• Undertake an annual health and safety audit and (termly) health and safety visits/walk rounds</li> <li>• Work with the health and safety representative to ensure action points raised by any audits are implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul Skelding</li> </ul>
<b>Curriculum Governor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as a champion for the curriculum, ensuring that all governors recognise the importance of the role it plays in delivering a high-quality education</li> <li>• Work strategically with the chair of governors to ensure effective governor monitoring of curriculum-related priorities</li> <li>• Actively meet, engage with and question school leaders to remain updated with developments across the school and align monitoring with priorities</li> <li>• Keep abreast of key legislation and guidance in relation to the curriculum. and with national and local initiatives</li> <li>• Undertake appropriate training and be familiar with relevant policies and procedures</li> <li>• Contribute to meetings with the school's Link Adviser where the focus is around the curriculum</li> <li>• Ensure that the governing board is assured that the school complies with the DfE statutory requirements in relation to the curriculum including</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tom Gray</li> </ul>

	<p>the school website, delivery of the 'basic' curriculum and meeting the legal requirement for promoting the cultural development of pupils through SMSC requirements</p>	
<p><b>Wellbeing Governor</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure wellbeing is included in school's strategic planning and act as a mental health champion for the school.</li> <li>• Ensure the appropriate mental health policies are in place and mental health and wellbeing are embedded in the curriculum.</li> <li>• Monitor the impact of wellbeing policy and provision.</li> <li>• Ensure the governing body are carrying out their duty of care to the headteacher and prioritise the headteacher's wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Karen Bridle &amp; Kate Nolan</li> </ul>
<p><b>Link Governor</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain a record of governor training and use this alongside the governor skills audit to help identify group and individual training needs</li> <li>• To keep governing bodies up to date on developments within the local authority and encourage governors to attend the governor training on offer</li> <li>• See Strategic Intent 6: enhancing governor induction and CPD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gina Webb</li> </ul>